

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 189662
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY ARA:FMCNEIL:AMB VAKY:JD
APPROVED BY P - MR. NEWSOM
NSC:RPASTOR
HA:MSCHNEIDER
S/S-O:SRPVALERGA

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Z O 271600Z JUL 78 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ FLASH
INFO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 189662

NODIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BL

SUBJECT: POSTURE TOWARD PEREDA

REF: LA PAZ 5933

1. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO SEE PEREDA CONFIDENTIALLY AND INFORMALLY.
2. CLEARLY OUR GOAL IS TO ENCOURAGE PEREDA TO GET THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT BACK ON THE TRACK PROMPTLY AND TO PRESERVE EARLIER GAINS IN PERSONAL HUMAN RIGHTS. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, WANT TO PUT OURSELVES IN THE POSITION OF BEING A PARTY TO AN QTE AGREEMENT UNQTE BETWEEN THE PEREDA GOVERNMENT AND OUR-CONFIDENTIAL

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SELVES ON A POLITICAL TIMETABLE.

3. IT APPEARS TO US THAT PEREDA MAY NOT BE SET IN CONCRETE AS TO THE ELECTORAL CALENDAR, AND THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MOVE IT FORWARD. HE IS QUOTED IN A JUAN DE ONIS INTERVIEW IN TODAY'S NYT, FOR EXAMPLE, AS SAYING THAT ELECTIONS MIGHT BE HELD IN 18 MONTHS

IF THE ELECTORAL LAW AND VOTER REGISTRATION CAN BE REFORMED IN TIME. IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH HIM YOU SHOULD CONGRATULATE HIM ON HIS FORTHCOMING POSITION BUT URGE THAT HE SHORTEN THE TIME SPAN, ARGUING THAT THIS IS IMPORTANT TO BOLIVIA'S IMAGE AND HIS REGIME'S CREDIBILITY IN THE HEMISPHERE AND IN THE U.S. IT WOULD BE VERY DESIRABLE IF ELECTIONS COULD BE HELD IN A YEAR, BUT IN ANY CASE, RECOGNIZING THE WORK THAT MUST BE DONE IN PREPARING, HE SHOULD TRY TO KEEP THAT SPAN AS SHORT AS HE CAN. IN SUM, WE WANT TO PRESS HIM TO SHORTEN MEANINGFULLY THE TIME SPAN (WHICH WE THINK IMPORTANT FOR ITS EFFECT ON OTHER HEMISPHERE COUNTRIES) BUT NOT SO HARD THAT WE DISCOURAGE HIM FROM THIS HOPEFUL COURSE.

4. YOU SHOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT PEREDA OUGHT TO BE LOOKING TO BUILD SOME CONSENSUS BEHIND HIS PLAN AND ASSUME THAT THEREFORE HE IS DOING THIS WITH THE OPPOSITION.

5. WE ALSO SUGGEST YOU TURN AROUND HIS ARGUMENT ON THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC AND POINT OUT TO HIM THAT UNDER THE RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES 1979 COULD BE A YEAR OF PROGRESS ON THE ACCESS TO THE SEA ISSUE MAKING IT A GOOD YEAR FOR ELECTIONS.

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6. TELL PEREDA HE SHOULD NOT BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE RECOGNITION ISSUE. WE DO NOT SEE THE ISSUE OF RECOGNITION ARISING. OUR PRACTICE IS NOT REPEAT NOT TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF RECOGNITION OR NON-RECOGNITION, BUT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT WE ARE QTE MAINTAINING UNQTE RELATIONS AFTER A DECENT INTERVAL HAS PASSED AND WE ARE SATISFIED AS TO GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL AND BASIC INTENTIONS. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, AND WE THINK FROM HIS, IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO INDICATE MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONS IN LOW KEY FASHION AFTER HIS SPEECH. IF WE DO IT BEFORE HIS SPEECH, IT WILL BE PERCEIVED AS THE RESULT OF SOME SORT OF PREAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PEREDA, PRECISELY THE SORT OF THING TO WHICH NEITHER HE NOR WE WISH TO BECOME PARTIES.

7. AS FAR AS AID IS CONCERNED, THE DEGREE TO WHICH HE CAN WORK OUT SOMETHING REASONABLE AND CREDIBLE TO PUT BOLIVIA BACK ON THE PATH OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVE THE GAINS IN INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

AND ANNOUNCE IT IN HIS SPEECH WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT

FACTOR IN OUR CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AID.

8. IT WOULD HELP THE CREDIBILITY OF THE NEW REGIME IF PEREDA WOULD DETAIL TO SOME DEGREE IN HIS SPEECH THE PROTECTIONS HE WILL GIVE TO PERSONAL RIGHTS IN PRESERVING THE RECENT GAINS MADE IN BOLIVIA, I.E., DUE PROCESS, FULL PRESS, POLITICAL AND LABOR FREEDOMS AND THE CONTINUED AVOIDANCE OF DETENTIONS OR EXPULSIONS FROM COUNTRY ON POLITICAL GROUNDS.

9. THE FOREGOING IS OUR POSITION ON THE SUBSTANCE. YOU SHOULD, OF COURSE, TELL HIM THAT THE U.S. IS GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM TAPIA THAT HE INTENDS TO MAKE A HONEST, CONFIDENTIAL

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THOUGHTFUL EFFORT TO PUT BOLIVIA ON THE DEMOCRATIC TRACK AND CLEAN UP CORRUPTION. HIS IDEA OF A NEW ELECTORAL COURT WITH INDEPENDENT POWERS CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES WITH THE POWERS HE HAS IN MIND OFFER THE OBJECTIVE HOPE THAT THE NEXT BOLIVIAN ELECTION COULD HAVE THE LEGITIMACY AND CREDIBILITY DENIED THE LAST ONE. TO THE EXTENT THAT HE CAN SPELL OUT A CONCRETE TIMETABLE OF STEPS BETWEEN NOW AND ELECTION DATE, IT WOULD HELP ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY FOR THE NEW PROCESS AT HOME AND AROUND THE HEMISPHERE. WHILE WE REGRET THE INTERRUPTION OF THE PROCESS AND REMAINED CONCERNED, WE APPRECIATE HIS EFFORTS AND WANT TO BE HELPFUL IF HE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, HUMAN RIGHTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PLANNING MEETINGS, POLITICAL FREEDOM, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE189662
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FMCNEIL:AMB VAKY:JD
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: OA
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840140-2059
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780715/aaaaamsa.tel
Line Count: 150
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5c42d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 78 LA PAZ 5933
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1871847
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSTURE TOWARD PEREDA
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, PGOV, BL, US, (PEREDA, JUAN)
To: LA PAZ WHITE HOUSE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5c42d76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014